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Prevention of armed conflict

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Letter dated 17 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Pavlo Klimkin, on the third anniversary of flight MH17 (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under items 31 and 108, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Volodymyr **Yelchenko**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 17 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Pavlo Klimkin, on the third anniversary of flight MH17

Three years ago, a world becoming accustomed to the most despicable terrorist outrages was shocked and stunned when 298 passengers and crew members of Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 were blasted out of the skies over Ukraine.

For many around the world it brought the Russian-fomented war in Donbas to their attention for the first time.

Even for Ukrainians, including those facing death in Donbas, it was impossible to believe that terrorists had the ability to hit the civilian aircraft 11,000 m above the ground. Even with all the support Russia was known to be providing, it was simply not credible or believable in any way.

Can economic and political sanctions or awards in a criminal case compensate the grief of so many who lost their loved ones? No, I am afraid it cannot. But the Ukrainian Government has made a pledge, and we are determined to do everything in our power to unveil the truth and bring those responsible for this mass murder to justice.

And if we do not, those for whom human lives mean little more than a number or a statistic will continue in their homicidal ways. The path of truth can be both narrow and difficult. It takes time and determination to travel. But once set in motion, the wheels of justice grind inexorably — we will reach our goal.

Two investigations have been carried out into this case. The first was a technical investigation led by the Dutch Security Board. The second was a criminal investigation conducted by the Joint Investigation Team, made up of prosecutors from Ukraine, the Netherlands, Australia, Belgium and Malaysia. According to both investigations, the aircraft was downed by a Buk missile, and that Buk missile was launched from territory controlled by Russia-backed terrorists. Furthermore, the same Buk missile was brought from Russia, and after the attack its launcher was delivered back to Russia.

But we are only halfway to our ultimate objective. We want to know who pushed the button, who gave the order and what was the ultimate chain of command. In short the world needs to know, and the families of the 298 who were slain need to know, who was ultimately responsible for the murder of their loved ones.

The five countries making up the Joint Investigation Team have now decided to prosecute those responsible for the downing of flight MH17. This will be done within the Dutch judicial system, and as the process begins, we count on the support of all nations and people of goodwill.

The threshold of proof is high, and the trial must be objective and the verdict internationally recognized. Those who would foment wars in sovereign countries by supporting and funding terrorists and sending others to kill must be exposed for what they are and held to account. No less than the core values of our rules-based world order, for which the likes of the Russian Federation show so much contempt, depend on this happening.